

**ABSTRACT**

A method of forming a microelectronic structure and its associated structures is described. That method comprises providing a substrate comprising a sacrificial layer disposed on a hard mask layer, and a metal layer disposed in a trench of the substrate and on the sacrificial layer, removing the metal layer at a first removal rate wherein a dishing is induced on a top surface of the metal layer until the sacrificial layer is exposed, and simultaneously removing the metal layer and the sacrificial layer at a second removal rate without substantially removing the hard mask.